

The Pittsylvania Packet

Winter 2003

Number 47



Pittsylvania Historical Society

Chatham, Virginia

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You can also contact me at 434-432-0595, or at sarahmitchell@vintagedesigns.com.

Of particular interest at this time are letters to and from Pittsylvania County soldiers in the Civil War, World War I, World War II, etc.; and articles about Pittsylvania County soldiers.

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Thank you!

The Pittsylvania Historical Society would like to thank all that gave generously of their time, money, and expertise this past year. The Callands Festival, the Reconstruction and Dedication of the Tobacco Barn, and Christmas in Historic Chatham were just some of the activities that the Historical Society were entirely or in part responsible for, and without volunteers nothing would have been accomplished.

President's Report

As we approach the beginning of a new year, it is a good time to reflect upon the past. The purpose of the Pittsylvania Historical Society's existence is to preserve and to build upon the positive things of our heritage. In many ways the past year was a year of accomplishments.

Opportunities for service are presenting great challenges for the coming year. We need the support of all the membership and the public in the Veteran's History Museum Project. This is a worthy project because it gives us an opportunity to show that we appreciate the people that served our country.

- J. Fuller Motley

Note from the Editor

I would like to thank all the contributing writers for their excellent submissions, and ask our readers to please continue to send in announcements, articles, queries, and anything that you think that *Pittsylvania Packet* readers would find interesting!

- Sarah E. Mitchell

The Packet Mailbag

“I am pleased to send the enclosed check for my membership renewal [and gift]. The [gift], I would like to donate towards the 1813 Clerk’s Office in memory of William Tunstall, first Clerk of the Court and his son, grandson, and great-grandson, each of whom held the position in succeeding generations. My great-grandfather, Whitmell Pugh Tunstall, did not follow that family’s line but chose legislative and formation of the first railroad for [Pittsylvania] County. Regretfully, he didn’t live to see the fulfillment of his aspiration. He was later honored by the title of First President of the Southern Railroad. So, as you can see, I’m extremely proud of my Tunstall ancestors of Pittsylvania County. (I only wish I could accomplish as much!)”

- Dorothy B. Ingham, Clarksville, VA

“I am a three year member of your Society, and I enjoy the [*Pittsylvania*] *Packet* very much. . . . I am African American, and really enjoyed the article on Sam Lovelace [Summer 2001 issue], as much as all others.”

- Bertha Carter, Alton, IL

“I am a direct descendant of one of the oldest residents of Pittsylvania County, Thomas Mustain. You will never know how pleased and happy I was to locate that part of my family and to find the Pittsylvania Historical Society. . . . I am impressed with your publications, book, and the outstanding work you do. I have even received a letter from Herman Melton (former president) and talked with him on the phone. . . . I am only sorry I live so far away. I read about your activities and want to share them.”

- Joan F. Cox, Midland, TX

Winter Meeting to be held January 20th

The Winter Meeting will be held on January 20th at 7:30 PM at the 1813 Clerk's Office in Chatham, Virginia. The 1813 Clerk's Office is situated behind Chatham Town Hall on Court Street.

Plans regarding the speaker are still being finalized. All are invited to attend; feel free to bring along neighbors and friends.

Notes from the Veterans History Project Committee

by Glenn Giles

At the Fall Meeting Dr. R. Lee Wayland, Jr., President of the Danville Kiwanis Club Foundation, made a presentation of a \$10,000 grant to the Society's Veterans History Project. This grant was the result of the work being done by Pittsylvania County high school students as they record oral histories of Pittsylvania County veterans. The grant will provide funds to cover expenses of materials and equipment for the History Project.

Patrick Touart, a history teacher at Tunstall High School and recently acclaimed outstanding Educator of the Year in Virginia, has agreed to become the Executive Director heading up the Pittsylvania Veterans History Project. The society is very pleased and grateful to Patrick for bringing his professional expertise as a historian to this project.

Notes from the Society's Museum Committee

by Langhorne Jones, Jr.

The museum committee has been busy these last three months getting ready for the big rearrangement that was discussed at the Pittsylvania Historical Society meeting in October. This rearrangement is currently underway.

With help from several society members the Revolutionary War Diorama, depicting the Race to the Dan, has been moved from its temporary location in the Pittsylvania County School Cultural Center in Chatham to its permanent location in the 1813 Clerks Office Museum. A new showcase has been made to house the extensive Indian artifacts and will be in place along with the existing showcases before the January meeting. Please come to the January meeting and see the changes to the museum. All planned rearrangements will not be completed when you arrive for the meeting but rest assured work is in progress and any one wishing to volunteer time to help will be greatly appreciated.

Because of the new heat/air conditioning installed in the 1813 Clerk's Office the building is much more user friendly and has therefore been used more these last three months. Two local Garden Clubs have held meetings in the building and were impressed with our artifacts. They agreed that these are well-kept secrets.

Christmas in Historic Chatham held its annual Yule Log ceremony on Friday, December 6 and held an open house with light refreshments the next day, both in the 1813 Clerk's Office, when the town was decked out for the annual Christmas in Historic Chatham celebration.

Herman Melton publishes 6th Hardcover Book

Herman Melton is pleased to announce that the much anticipated *Thirty-Nine Lashes – Well Laid On: Crime and Punishment in Southside Virginia 1750 - 1950* is now available. The hardcover book is 400 pages and is illustrated, footnoted, and indexed.

The book contains accounts of some of the crimes committed and the punishment meted out for law violations in the Southside Virginia counties of Bedford, Campbell, Franklin, Halifax, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania during the Colonial, Revolutionary War, Federal, Antebellum, Civil War, Reconstruction, Victorian, and Twentieth Century periods. This work should become a valuable genealogical tool since hundreds of family names appear throughout the text.

The book costs \$24.00 including shipping and handling; Virginia residents add 90 cents for sales tax. Send orders to the Pittsylvania History Project, 270 North Main St., Chatham, VA 24531.

James Osborne releases 4th book

by Susan Worley

Local author James Osborne, who lives at Whittles, has released his fourth book on Pittsylvania County. All are titled *Remembrances* and each volume documents history of a section of the county. He began his project to document information about the county and county history in 1997. His books are compiled from personal knowledge and personal interviews with people who live in the areas he is writing about. Osborne, 88, says he has enjoyed meeting people county wide and writing his books. "My books cover old things, lasting memories," said Osborne. "They are important to have and to read."

His first three books are on central Pittsylvania County (volume 1), eastern Pittsylvania County (volume 2), and northern Pittsylvania County (volume 3). Volume 4 concentrates on western Pittsylvania County. Among the areas featured are Anderson Mill Road, Banister River, Burton Lake Road, Callands Road, Route 750, Cooksburg, Dalton Road, Five Forks, Hollywood, Ivory Branch Road, Mineola to Dalton Road, Rondo, Greenpond, Mountain Valley, Museville, Pigg River, Pullens, Rorer, Sago, Worlds, Vashti, Turkeycock Creek and Callands.

He talks about homes, cemeteries, old school sites, stores, churches, dairies, racing and some family histories. There are many photographs.

Osborne describes his books as documentations of a lifetime of memories. Born in a log cabin on the Osborne family farm near Climax, he was one of 12 children. He attended Green Bay and Climax schools and remembers all dirt roads, wagons and horseback as basic transportation, growing what you ate, visiting neighbors, being in church whenever the doors were open, and oil lamps and lanterns.

Over the years, Osborne worked at a sawmill and for the Virginia Department of Transportation. He was a farmer, fire warden, deputy sheriff, security guard, magistrate, and operated a service station.

Years ago somebody mentioned that he should write a book about his memories and he agreed it was a good idea. Since then he has been traveling, meeting people, talking, taking notes and tape recording, not only what he remembers, but memories of everyone with whom he comes in contact.

For purchasing information, contact Mr. James Osborne, 21700 US Highway 29, Chatham, VA 24531 or by phone at 434-656-8269.

The WPA's Virginia Historical Inventory Available Online

by Sarah E. Mitchell

The WPA's Virginia Historical Inventory has been made available online by the Library of Virginia. The web address is <http://eagle.vsla.edu/vhi> .

The Library of Virginia website describes the collection: "The Virginia Historical Inventory (VHI) is a collection of photographs, maps, and detailed reports documenting the architectural, cultural, and family histories of thousands of 18th- and 19th-century buildings in communities across Virginia. Workers for the Virginia Historical Inventory documented, assessed, and photographed early structures (many of which do not survive today), creating a pictorial and textual prism through which . . . the general public can study a unique record of Virginia's past. . . . The project was created in the late 1930s by the Virginia Writers' Project, a branch of the federally funded Works Progress Administration (WPA)."

The Inventory features almost 600 files on Pittsylvania County and approximately 80 on Danville. The files were primarily written by Lona Dalton, Mabel Moses, and Mattie S. Meadows, and feature information on everything from old family Bibles and antiques to homes and covered bridges in the county. Some photographs are also available.

Tiff-viewing software is required to view most of the files. The software is available as a free download at the Library of Virginia website.

For those without internet access, the Pittsylvania County Public Library has portions of the WPA's Virginia Historical Inventory available on microfilm.

Housekeeping in Old Pittsylvania

by Patricia B. Mitchell

In 1879 John P. Morton and Company first published *Housekeeping in Old Virginia*, compiled by Marion Cabell Tyree. Mrs. Tyree, born Marion Fontaine Henry, of Lynchburg, Virginia was “. . . a frequent visitor, and often the intimate guest and kinswoman, at many . . . homes.” (Mrs. Tyree also happened to be a granddaughter of Patrick Henry.) From these associations she solicited recipes which she put in a book, along with her own thoughts and advice.

Included in the volume are three recipes by a “Mrs. Col. S.” and one by “Col. S.” from Pittsylvania County. (Mrs. Tyree protected the identity of her sources by giving only the initials of her contributors.) Using some clues and some speculation, it is surmised that these Smiths were Col. Francis Smith and his wife. The Colonel was son-in-law of Maj. William Sutherlin, owner of the “Last Capitol of the Confederacy” Victorian villa on “Millionaire’s Row” in Danville, Virginia.

Mrs. Col. Smith evidently was fond of precious lemons for she contributed two lemon recipes – Lemon Pie and Lemon Meringue. The Colonel gave his formula for potent Apple Toddy, which he might have needed after dining on his wife’s Pig’s Head Pudding.

LEMON PIE.

Yolks of four eggs, white of one, beaten very light; grated rind and juice of one large lemon; five heaping tablespoonfuls sugar. Bake in an undercrust till the pastry is done. Froth the whites of three eggs with five tablespoonfuls sugar. Spread over the pies and bake again till brown. — Mrs. Col. S.

LEMON MERINGUE.

One pint of bread crumbs soaked in a quart of new milk.

1 cup of sugar.

Yolks of 4 eggs.

Grated rind of 1 lemon.

Beat these ingredients light and bake as custard. Then spread on fruit jelly or stewed apples (fresh). Froth the whites with four tablespoonfuls of sugar and juice of the lemon. Spread over the top and brown. — Mrs. Col. S.

APPLE TODDY.

One gallon of apple brandy or whiskey, one and a half gallon[s] of hot water, well sweetened, one dozen large apples, well roasted, two grated nutmegs, one gill of allspice, one gill of cloves, a pinch of mace. Season with half a pint of good rum. Let it stand three or four days before using. — Col. S.

PIG'S HEAD PUDDING.

Boil head and liver until perfectly done, cut up as for hash. Put it on again in warm water and season highly with butter, pepper, salt, and a little chopped onion.

After well seasoned, put in a baking-dish with one egg beaten light. Bake two hours, and lay over hard-boiled eggs sliced, and strips of pastry across the top.

Calf's Head Pudding can be made in the same way. — Mrs. Col. S.

*Editor's note: The Pittsylvania Historical Society owns a copy of **Housekeeping in Old Virginia** dated 1890. It was evidently so well used that a previous owner had to replace the cover of the book, using the cover of Gilbert Parker's **The Right of Way** (which was first published circa 1901).*

About the Author: Patricia B. Mitchell, a Pittsylvania County native and current resident, is a food historian. She currently has over 50 books in print. For more of her articles and book information, see her website: <http://www.foodhistory.com/> .

A Revolution That Failed: Secession in Pittsylvania County

by Herman Melton

A wise man once characterized a rebellion as a revolution that failed and a revolution as a rebellion that succeeded. In retrospect it is clear that none of the 3198 Pittsylvania County citizens who voted for secession on May 23, 1861 thought they were voting to adopt a measure that was in violation of the law. Moreover, none of them cared whether it was or not. Nevertheless, the action was in violation of Federal law.

A month earlier on April 17th, the Virginia General Assembly voted to adopt the following: "An Ordinance to repeal the ratification of the Constitution of the United States of America by the State of Virginia and to resume all rights and powers granted under said Constitution adopted in the convention in the City of Richmond on the 17th day of April, 1861."

The vote on secession was held in eighteen county precincts. According to the election records, not one single person voted against the proposal.

Whether or not there were those who opposed secession but were intimidated into either remaining neutral or into supporting the measure is a matter of conjecture.

The vote "FOR" precinct by precinct was as follows: Beavers 76, Callands 239, Cascade 220, Chalk Level 110, Hill Grove 130, Laurel Grove 219, Moormans 89, Riceville 100, Ringgold 112, Rorers 232, Spring Garden 69, Smiths 26, Straightsone 58, Whites 72, Whitmell 225, Danville 413, Pittsylvania Court House 240. (Source: Pittsylvania County Muster Roll 1861-1865. [UDC])

Two months prior to the adoption of the Ordinance of Secession on April 17th, the Pittsylvania County Court ordered the Sheriff to make preparations to purchase arms on credit in three payments. The arms were for the "Militia" to use in defence of the county. (Source: Court Record Book 46, page 150.)

As if the prospect of war was not chilling enough for county citizens, an even more threatening scourge made its appearance. It is a little known fact that a serious small pox epidemic broke out in the county seat during this time frame. The Court moved quickly to purchase furniture to equip a small hospital that would isolate the patients. In so doing, a potentially disastrous epidemic was contained. (Source: Court Record Book 46, page 162.)

Despite the threat from the richer, more powerful, and populous North, most Pittsylvanians failed to foresee that the county would soon face its most desperate hour in history.

About the Author: Herman Melton is a former president of the Pittsylvania Historical Society and a former editor of *The Pittsylvania Packet*. He has published six hardcover and several smaller

softcover books on local history. The above is excerpted from Herman Melton's *Thirty-Nine Lashes – Well Laid On: Crime and punishment in Pittsylvania County 1750 - 1950*.

What Was The News In the Late 1800's?

by Preston Moses (1908 - 1996)

[The following excerpts are from] old copies of the *Pittsylvania Tribune*: one dated July 20, 1877, another dated Feb. 20, 1885 and another dated April 25, 1890, which reported on the news of that time.

The July 20, 1877 issue announced: "The firm of H. Davis, L. H. Pigg and J. J. Hardwicke dissolved partnership, and Pigg and Davis will continue as publishers of the *Tribune*."

In the same issue, Dr. Rawley W. Martin, Chatham physician of the Civil War fame, reported diphtheria raging in the rural areas of Pittsylvania County.

On Feb. 20, 1885 a meeting of Chatham citizens was called by the joint stock company to plan for the erection of a tobacco warehouse and tobacco factory in Chatham. The notice was signed by J. J. Lamkin, chairman.

A correspondent from Bergers store reported: "Born to Dr. and Mrs. John Jones, Jr., a son on the coldest day in many years."

Tribune Editor Pigg wrote: "At the recent session of the Legislature, an act was passed March 1885 requiring all railroads to establish depots ten miles apart and telegraph offices at each depot, and to use spark arrestors on the engines to prevent

forest fires.”

Supervisors had problems in 1885: “The supervisors will meet to discuss the controversial fence law, and likely will submit the question to a vote of the people this spring.”

Income taxes were problems too in those days: “Judge Davis decided in a court decision that the income taxes must be paid even if the income was invested in property which was also listed for taxation.”

A big news item on April 25, 1890 told that “the chances of Chatham being selected as the site of the Virginia Baptist Orphanage are very good.”

The news item went on to tell: “A delegation came to Chatham this morning by train and inspected the homes of Dr. Rawley W. Martin and John Gilmer as possible sites for the Virginia Baptist Orphanage.

“The Chatham committee waited on the visitors and told of the advantages of the town; pointed out that the drinking water comes from a reservoir and pours from the hydrant’s spouts in a strong, clear and pure stream.

“The warm and dusty inspectors were refreshed from pitchers of cool lemonade, and then taken to the station and the left Chatham at 5 p.m. enroute to Liberty.” (Moses noted: Chatham didn’t get it – the orphanage was located at Salem.)

The *Tribune* of April 1890 showed that modern science had come to the dentistry practice; a Chatham dentist has a preparation for extracting teeth without pain.

A train wreck was reported thusly: “The

mixed train on the Franklin & Pittsylvania Railroad coming south on the morning of the 21st (April 1890) jumped the track near Union Hall and the engine and three cars wrecked. No loss of life."

Personal Notes 1890: "Mr. J. P. Hunt is planning to build a handsome residence adjoining the Presbyterian Church.

"Entertainment was provided by Mr. Duval Porter, who delivered an interesting lecture on the 'Flea' here Monday night to a small audience."

From the clerk's office: "C. H. Pickeral appointed surveyor of the road from Signboard near Harmon Cook's to the Pocket Road near Henry T. Dalton, James V. Mahan appointed surveyor of road from Cook's Mill by Anderson's Mill to Greenpond - Museville Road."

Marriage licenses issued [and reported in the April 25, 1890 *Tribune*] to Thomas D. Saunders and Mary R. M. Poindexter; George M. Neal and Elize J. Dalton; Columbus Mitchell and Dollie C. Mitchell.

The Louisiana State Lottery advertised a mammoth drawing for a grand prize of \$300,000.

In the April 25, 1890 issue, the news from the circuit court reported that liquor licenses were approved and issued by the court to the following persons to sell whiskey: to Wm. Cousins of Callands, G. A. Crews of Mt. Airy, G. W. Crist of Chatham, R. L. Dodson of Chestnut Level, C. T. Davis of Whittles station, J. R. Glidesell of Dry Bridge, G. T. Johnson of Chatham, J. M. Marshall of Marshall's store, T. F. Motley of Cedar Hill, J. J. Motley of Shockoe, S. W. Mustain of Chalk Level, G. W. Oakes of Swansonville, S. H. Reynolds of Worlds, S. J. Shelton of Elba, S. S. Spruce of Chatham, C. G. Sours of Chatham, and J. R. Yates

of Chatham and Lola. The news item stated that other licenses would be considered at a later date.

*Editor's note: The preceding article is presumed to have been printed in the **Star-Tribune** sometime in the 1970's. The undated newspaper clipping was preserved in the Glenn B. Updike, Sr. Collection, Scrapbook Volume 33, Pittsylvania Historical Society.*

About the Author: Preston Moses (1908-1996) was a former president of the Pittsylvania Historical Society and former editor of *The Pittsylvania Packet*. Before he retired, he was editor of the *Star-Tribune*, Chatham's newspaper, for many years. Preston was also a talented artist; his series of prints of long-ago Pittsylvania scenes is on display in the 1813 Clerk's Office.

Red Means Renew

If you have a red mark on your mailing label, the Pittsylvania Historical Society has not received your membership renewal. (If you have renewed in the last couple of weeks, please disregard the red mark.)

Deadline for Submissions

Please submit any announcements, articles, etc. for the next issue of *The Pittsylvania Packet* by the third week of March.

If you are planning a family reunion that will feature information on your family's history and Pittsylvania County roots, we will be glad to print an announcement (if it can be published in time for the event).

Books, Etc. For Sale

To order, send check or money order to: Susan Worley, 380 Greenbay Road, Chatham, Virginia 24531. All prices include postage.

Maud Carter Clement, *History of Pittsylvania County, Virginia*, reprinted in hardcover. \$24.00.

Maud Carter Clement, *War Recollections of the Confederate Veterans of Pittsylvania County, Virginia 1861 - 1865*, softcover. \$12.00.

Roger Dodson, *Footprints From the Old Survey Books*, softcover. \$12.00.

Madelene Fitzgerald, *Pittsylvania Homes and History of the Past*, hardcover. \$20.00

Madelene Fitzgerald and Frances Hurt, *Eighteenth Century Landmarks of Pittsylvania County, Virginia*, softcover. \$12.00

Frances Hurt, *An Intimate History of the American Revolution in Pittsylvania County*, Illustrated and Fully indexed, hardcover. \$17.00.

Kenyon McCann, *Ride Into Darkness*, Pittsylvania County's first historical novel based on actual 1840 mass murder. Softcover. 217 pages. \$12.50.

Kenyon McCann, *A Cruel Wind Blowing*, Author's sequel to *Ride into Darkness*. Historical novel set in Pittsylvania County. Softcover. \$13.50

Herman Melton, editor, *Old Fast & Perfect: Sketches from the 54 Year Life of the Franklin & Pittsylvania Railroad 1878 - 1932*. 28 pages, softcover. \$3.75

Herman Melton, *Pittsylvania County's Historic Courthouse: The Story Behind Ex Parte Virginia and the Making of a National Landmark*. Softcover, indexed, illustrated. \$13.00

Herman Melton, *Picks, Tracks, and Bauteaux*. Hardcover. \$24.00

Lucille Payne, *Pittsylvania County, Virginia Inventories and Accounts Current 1790 - 1797*. Hardcover, indexed. \$24.00

Mary Catherine Plaster, editor, *Idle Hens Don't Lay*. Historical Cookbook. Softcover, \$11.93

Gray's Map of Chatham, Virginia 1878. Rare, full color print, suitable for framing. Many names and features. \$3.50.